

No. 174 June 1990

# Hillandale

NEWS





# Kurt & Diane Nauck are delighted to announce their 3rd TREMENDOUS MUSIC AUCTION

consisting of fine and rare  
78 rpm RECORDS, CYLINDERS & DIAMOND DISCS

Included in this auction will be examples from the following categories:

- \* Berliners
- \* Early Classical & Operatic
- \* Electric Diamond Discs
- \* Victor Picture Records
- \* Pre-Dog Victors
- \* Puzzle Records
- \* Mercury Picture Records
- \* Rare Jazz & Blues
- \* Unusual Labels
- \* Test Pressings
- \* 2-Minute Wax Cylinders
- \* Theatrical & Personality
- \* Brown Wax Cylinders
- \* Victor Long Plays
- \* Edison Needle Cuts
- \* Historical Cylinders & 78's
- \* Concert Cylinders
- \* Early Hillbilly & Cajun
- \* Pink Lambers
- \* 5000 Series Blue Amberols
- \* Edison Sample Records
- \* Edison Long Plays
- \* Vogue Picture Records
- \* ...and much, much more!

In addition to records, this auction will contain rare books and catalogs, piano rolls, phonographs, parts and accessories. The records pictured on this page comprise some of the lots to be found in the auction.

If you were not a bidder in our last auction, you may receive a copy of the auction catalog by sending \$3.00 along with your name, address, phone number and a want list if you have one. We will be mailing catalogs beginning in April, and the auction itself will close in June. This is a MAIL auction, not a public one, so you bid from your own home. (You wouldn't want to come to Houston in the summertime, anyway!)

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# The HILLANDALE News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded in 1919

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**T**HIS IS MY SWAN SONG. I now vacate the Editorial Chair which will in future be occupied by Charles Levin. Not only will Charles be a very good Editor but he will be producing "The Hillandale News" on the Society's newly-acquired high-powered computerised publishing system.

I took on the task of this journal's design and production with the June 1987 edition, and we changed to the present format in April 1988. There was some opposition to the new style at first, but lately even my sternest critics have been kind enough to say they have never seen anything like it. All the same, I predict that when Charles gets going with his new equipment the "Hillandale" will appear with an entirely new up-market image, making this June edition, banged out on a typewriter, look hopelessly fuddy-duddy and amateurish. Personally I look forward to the improvement and wish Charles every good fortune.

It has been a great pleasure being your Editor. I have been constantly amazed at the high quality of the contributions, and I thank all who submitted them for keeping me going. I leave on a high note, with articles from Canada and Finland, and the promise of something good to come from the U.S.A. Charles will need your help every bit as much as I did, so keep it coming. Farewell!

T.C.

## CHANGE OF EDITOR

*In future please send all material for publication to the new Editor,  
CHARLES LEVIN, at [REDACTED] Hertfordshire, England SG8 7BB*

FRONT COVER: Miles Ahead Again! (page 46)

# A Meeting in Montréal

by Paul Morris

**M**Y DECEMBER LETTER explained how I am teaching in Montréal, and gave a few first impressions of the local vintage record scene. I would now like to recount some recent happenings which may be of interest to fellow members.

Garage Sales (or "vent du garage" as the Québec language law compels advertisers to call them) can be found everywhere over the island of Montréal during sunny weekends. They can be a good hunting-ground for disc record collectors. "Garage Sale" is a bit of a misnomer since these events take place at street corners, roadsides and in forecourts. What is offered for sale varies enormously, from unwanted Christmas presents to what the dustman won't take, but prices seem to be fair.

It was at one of these sales that I met Ernie Reynolds. Having mastered the French for "do you have any old records", I was regretting not being able to recall the phrase for "I'm not interested in LPs, thank you", as I rejected the '60s microgroove discs the stall-holder was keenly offering me. Then I caught sight of a neatly-dressed elderly gentleman whose eyes sparkled as he asked if I was looking for "old-time" records. I said I was, and he scurried off, leaving me to practice my French once again.

It was a hot afternoon. Air-conditioners, fitted to the elegant 1920s houses, buzzed loudly. I had walked about five miles, buying records from a variety of antique shops for about 50¢ (25p) each plus a tax of 9% which was sometimes asked for. Ernie Reynolds (as he introduced himself) returned with a box of '20s discs in nice condition, and left me to sort through them. The majority were Victor labels; black and dark blue. Closer inspection showed that they were actually made in Montréal. Then I noticed something else. Discs with the labels Apex, Melotone, Crown, Decca, and Domino, all seemed to have been made in the district of Montréal called Lachine, and more than one of them indicated that the disc had

been made by the 'Compo Company of Lachine'. The activities of this company could be seen to span the gap between the pre-electrical era of the early '20s and the late '30s or even '40s, by the look of the material on the disc and its format. Here was, perhaps, an area to study; the inception, proliferation and demise of Montréal's local competition to the 'big boys' of Victor and Columbia. Perhaps the Compo Company was the Edison-Bell of Québec.

I gave Ernie Reynolds the money for the discs and congratulated myself on the best find so far in Montréal. But an even better find was about to come. "You're interested in old-timers, eh?" Ernie observed. "Yes," I said, and was about to leave when he added, "I thought you'd be interested to know that I used to work for Victor's. I've been retired now for a few years, but I started with the Berliner Gram-o-Phone Company, Montréal, as a lad in 1923. Perhaps you'd like to drop by some time, and I'll tell you about the old days". Would I! I couldn't believe my luck! I had stumbled upon one of the oldest surviving employees of the company that became R.C.A. Victor, and he had just offered to tell me all about it.

Ernie Reynolds is a modest man, and was surprised at the degree of interest I showed in his story. He made it clear that he would do his best to remember as many details as possible, but would ask to be forgiven if the odd point had fallen victim to the human memory, searching back over sixty years.

Ernie began working in the early twenties at a drug store in Montréal. His interest in the Berliner Gram-o-Phone Company was awakened when a school friend, who had a job there, offered to get Ernie a job too, if he could. The next day Ernie and friend went to the Gram-o-Phone works, located in St. Henri at the heart of Montréal's industrial centre. Soon they found Mr. Iran, the superintendent of staff. Ernie's case was put forward, but he was told to come back some other time. Disappointed, he



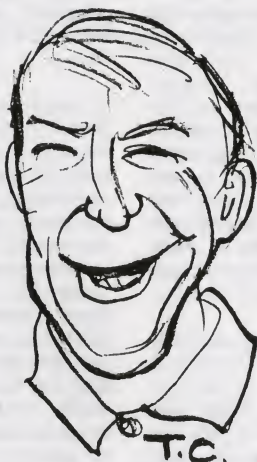
left. His friend was more optimistic, and suggested that he try the next day. This was done, with the same result. A third attempt also met with failure. Ernie and friend tried a fourth time. That morning Mr. Iran's bicycle broke down on his way to work. In a moment of weakness he told Ernie that if he could fix the bicycle he could have a job. That was in 1924, and sixty-six years later Ernie recalled fixing the bike and getting the job he had set his heart on. His starting wage was \$4 per week. (At the time of writing \$4 = £2). Ernie was to spend all his working life at The Berliner Gram-o-Phone Co. of St. Henri, Montréal, and when he retired in the seventies he was in charge of the payroll department. In 1924, however, things were different. He told me how he would arrive at 7.00 and clean floors, lavatories, windows and furniture in the offices, until 8.30 when the morning shift began. He would do whatever was required in those early days, and has clear memories of taking to hospital an employee who had had an accident with a band saw - with the three severed fingers in a brown paper bag.

Eventually he obtained the post of junior clerk. He was required to take messages from one part of the works to another, and in this way he got to know most of the staff quite well. During the late twenties it was not uncommon to lay off staff during quiet periods of the year, and it became a regular part of Ernie's job to go out and find labour when things picked up again. Many of the men had joined the dole queues in the meantime, and were happy to rejoin the company for a spell of work. Some of the women, however, had found alternative ways to make money, and modesty prevents me from describing the scenes that sometimes met the young clerk's eyes as he wandered up and down the streets of St. Henri in the twenties.

Ernie's next job involved production-

line checking. All components apart from the motors were assembled at Montréal. Wood from the mill was cut to size, planed, veneered, and assembled into cabinets. Each cabinet was allocated a card enumerating the operations which would follow its course through the factory. The person performing each operation would retain part of the card and hand it in as proof of work at the end of the day. Checking these cards

was Ernie's job. His final job at the Berliner Gram-o-Phone Co. arose because of a disagreement between the payroll clerk and his superiors. It resulted in the firing of the former and the panicking of the latter, who realised that payday was in only one day's time. Ernie was asked if he could stand in until a replacement was found, but none ever was, as there was no need. His experience in the drug store had made Ernie quick with figures, and he stayed in the payroll department for the rest of his working life, becoming ultimately the company's Chief Payroll Officer for



Ernie Reynolds

Canada.

Ernie told me there was a small recording studio at the factory, used mainly for French artists. He once saw a recording session, behind glass, and said each performer had his own microphone. This could have been in the fifties, he thought. Ernie recalled seeing Perry Como, and someone called E. Presley. The Beatles, too, visited, but Ernie managed to miss them.

My afternoon had been rewarding. As I gathered up my notes and prepared to leave, Ernie said, "Next time I'll introduce you to a friend who used to work as a recording engineer. He could tell you more about the records than I can." I had to sit down. Once again he had taken me by surprise. Perhaps here was the making of another story. Who knows?

# Berliner at the Opera

by Peter Adamson

I FOUND GEORGE TAYLOR'S interesting article both flattering and a little confusing. Flattering because he took special account of the Symposium CD ( a production rather close to my heart); and confusing because he relied for his basic information on Bauer's famous (and just occasionally notorious) discography of early operatic recordings. That is a book which can lead the otherwise uninformed reader to some strange conclusions. I may as well say at the outset that in many ways a much better introduction to operatic fare, at least the Italian, is Alan Kelly's recent Greenwood Press publication of the Italian Catalogue of Gramophone recordings from 1898 to 1929, a book every serious operatic collector should possess.

To take up some of George Taylor's points:

1. The list of singers he gives might well be extended if other records not in Bauer are taken into account. In any case, a quick count in both Bauer and Kelly gives the following rough numbers of Berliner discs:

	Bauer	Kelly
Adami	15	50
Caffetto	31	47
Cesarani (NOT Cesarini)	20	45
Franchi	12	25

Corradetti has so many I couldn't be bothered counting them! These figures give some idea of how much was left out of Bauer (and how much was included, perhaps against all the odds). Re-recordings, often with orchestra instead of piano, are not included in these counts.

2. Now we come to an artificial distinction which I must confess to having made myself, regarding candidates for the CD. A Berliner disc is clearly a disc without paper label, with Berliner's name on it, and is almost always 7". "Recorded for Berliner" is a much vaguer idea: does George Taylor include early 10" G & Ts which may or may not have appeared at first without paper labels

(i.e., as 10" Berliners)? I would have to agree that Bauer is not always crystal clear about what are 10" and what are 7" discs. But I can't see how Agussol and Michailova get onto the list "with ten or more Berliner operatics" if only the early 7" records are included. And Figner made only five 7" discs that I know of, and only one of these appears in Bauer, if 2-22601 is taken to be really 22601. Perhaps George Taylor has referred to the French and Russian **Voices of the Past** books, which I don't have.

3. George is quite right to point out that X (on 983X) signifies a re-recording. In this country the suffix letters were used in the order X, Z, W, Y, with some variations after the second letter, but American usage does seem to have been different. All the same, the extraordinary conclusion that the "original" 983 recorded in 1897 could be later than the re-recording is an absurdity which must point clearly to a revised assumption that Bauer's 983 can NOT be the original. As he never marks suffix letters (which were only rarely used in later G&T days anyway) it is safe to assume that his 983 would HAVE to be 983Y or 983Z.

4. Cesarani and Galan on 54112: this disc is so clearly written that only a very twisted reading of a very poor scratched copy could possibly be read as **Galassi** (who is not listed at all by Kelly - did she really exist?) Anyway, reference to 54122 is possibly a red herring, unless it is assumed that Galan is on both 54112 and 54122!

5. Lastly, dates in the Symposium CD leaflet are either from the discs themselves or based on Gaisberg's diaries or the matrix numbers (with significant help from Alan Kelly, it must be acknowledged). Bauer's dates are obviously dependent upon issue dates and other less accurate interpolations.

It would be interesting to have a survey of the operatic **repertoire** recorded in those days. Gelatt claimed that all the major arias and many minor ones were recorded by the turn of the century. Perhaps George Taylor could oblige?



# NIPPER'S UNCLE

WILLIAM BARRAUD AND HIS DISC RECORDS

Part 1

by Frank Andrews

**T**HE BARRAUDS CAME TO ENGLAND AS emigrant French Huguenots. The head of the family became a naturalised British subject in 1704. Through the years members of the family gained well-deserved reputations for fine workmanship in chronometer, watch and clock making, in photography, in art-decor, and in painting, both commercial and artistic. Francis James Barraud became known worldwide for his painting of "Nipper", the dog listening (originally) to an Edison-Bell "Commercial" phonograph. He entitled it "His Master's Voice", and later over-painted the phonograph with a gramophone.

Francis's father was Henry Barraud, whose wife, Annie Marie Rose, bore him four daughters and five sons. The fourth child and second son was Mark Barraud, and it was he who bought "Nipper" when still a puppy, and gave it to his two sons as a present. The dog became the pet of the family, but attached himself more to Mark than to the lads, often accompanying him to the theatres where he worked as a scenic artist. Three years later Mark died and the dog passed to the ownership of his two youngest brothers, Francis James, and Philip George, who ran a photographic studio in Liverpool.

Mark's immediate younger brother was William Barraud and, since Nipper was considered to be one of the family, he was the dog's "Uncle William". Born in 1851, the sixth child, he was to well outlive the allotted "three-score years and ten", not dying until 1937. In early adult life he became a clerk to some insurance brokers in London, but he soon became somewhat of a rolling stone, and emigrated to South Africa, where there was already a branch of the Barraud family. There he pursued the occupations of explorer, hunter, gold miner and guide. He once met an African tribe who were entranced with his luxurious beard: he became great friends with its Chief on the strength of it! He was back in London at the turn of the century. There, nearly fifty years of age, he married his cousin, Blanche Rose, probably in 1900.

In 1908 one finds William participating in the talking machine industry in both Britain and India, becoming associated with Aldridge, Salmon & Co.

Ltd., of Fenchurch Avenue in the City of London, a company registered in 1902 although it had been founded in Bombay, India, in the 1840s. Trading as General Merchants the company had, in July 1907, signed an Indenture of Service with E.J. Sabine, and the next month entered into an agreement with him and with a Mr. Thomas Frederick Bragg.

E.J. Sabine had joined the Columbia Phonograph Co. General soon after it opened its London branch in May 1900. He was later directed to its Berlin branch. In due course he parted from Columbia's employ and joined the National Phonograph Co. Ltd., with its business in Edison phonographs and cylinder records, in London, but then he left that concern in 1904 to join Dr. William Michaelis as Assistant Manager in the new Neophone Disc Phonograph business in London. About February 1906 it was intended that he should go to France to manage the Neophone business there. His brother, J.A. Sabine, was to vacate his managership of Neophone's Berlin branch in order to take his place in London. In the event, E.J. went to Brussels to manage La Compagnie Belge du Neophone Ltd. He was then brought back to England to manage Neophone's wholesale depot in Manchester.

The Neophone company was wound up on a decision taken in February 1907, but the International Neophone Co. Ltd. was founded on February 4th to control the overseas Neophone business, and E.J. Sabine was appointed one of its directors. The failing Neophone business in Britain had been purchased by James White's General Phonograph Co. Ltd., and by July 1907 it had already entered into

an agreement to handle the new International Neophone Company's business as well, except for the German market. Thus it was that E.J. Sabine's services were no longer required. This caused that gentlemen, experienced in the ways of the talking machine industry, to be available for employment by Aldridge, Salmon and Co. Ltd. that same July 1907, under the Indenture of Service already mentioned.

Thomas F. Bragg had been Neophone Ltd.'s export manager until the company went into liquidation in February 1907. By the following April he was already employed by the Columbia Phonograph Company General as the superintendent of its shipping department. He had thus been with that company only four months when, along with E.J. Sabine, he entered into his agreement with Aldridge Salmon in August 1907. (E.J. Sabine's brother, J.A., rejoined Columbia after Neophone Ltd. went into liquidation).

It is evident that the taking of Sabine and Bragg into Aldridge Salmon's employ was to enable that company to engage itself more fully and firmly in the talking machine business; perhaps to expand an already nascent trade which formed a part of the many other commodities in which it dealt. It must be emphasised that the company had an established branch of its business in India, and it is known that Neophone Ltd. had produced some Indian recordings. It may well have been the case that the company knew of Sabine and Bragg through having sold the Neophone products in India. But at this juncture this is pure speculation.

Having engaged Sabine and Bragg, Aldridge, Salmon and Co. Ltd. departmentalised the talking machine side of its business (or business-to-be) under the style of "The Universal Talking Machine Company", which began (or continued) to handle Columbia, Favorite, and Pathé lines in machines and records. Pathé and Favorite were both operating in India, and it is possible that Aldridge, Salmon's Indian branch had been trading in those lines for some time.

On 9th November 1907 a new private joint-stock company was founded with a

nominal capital of £1,000 in £1 shares. It was the Universal Talking Machine Co. Ltd., its registered office at the vendor's premises in Fenchurch Avenue. For £800, paid in the free issues of shares to Aldridge, Salmon & Co. Ltd., Universal Talking Machine Co. Ltd. bought the stock-in-trade, the benefit of existing contracts (including those of E.J. Sabine and T.F. Bragg) and the lease on the Fenchurch Avenue premises. F.T. Bragg was one of the directors. I have not discovered what position E.J. Sabine first held in the business.

One of the new company's first objectives was to sell a line of British made gramophones to sell from 2 guineas to 12 guineas. The purchase of the business was finally completed on 31st December 1907. By 25th January 1908 T.F. Bragg was also the Company Secretary. This new company had a very short life, as board meetings of 13th April and 5th May 1908 resolved and confirmed voluntarily to wind up the business, with a new company, having a larger capitalization, already in process of formation to take over.

#### ENTER WILLIAM ANDREW BARRAUD

William Barraud, then aged 56, was named as the Trustee acting for the new company in process of formation, which was to carry over the corporate name of the Universal Talking Machine Company Ltd., the first company being in the hands of its liquidator who was T.F. Bragg. William Barraud signed a document on 11th May 1908 stating that the directors of the company in liquidation had consented to their company's name being used for the new company. Besides being its trustee, Barraud was also the new company's first secretary. He also signed the Agreement upon which the new company was founded on a nominal capital of £5,000. Under the agreement the new Universal Talking Machine Company was to pursue a business in the dealing and manufacturing of talking machines and appliances and accessories connected therewith. It was to employ and equip expeditions to any part of the world for the purposes of obtaining recordings of speech and sounds, and was to employ and equip commissions, experts,



and other agents for those purposes; also to employ vocalist, military bands, orchestras, instrumental performers, reciters and speakers. Among the company's first directors were Edward J. Sabine, Thomas F. Bragg, and a Mr. Albert Addison, later to be appointed the Bombay manager. Aldridge, Salmon & Co. Ltd. held the controlling interest in the enterprise. It should be made quite clear that, although similarly named, this firm had no connection whatsoever with either the Universal Talking Machine Company or the Universal Talking Machine Manufacturing Company of the U.S.A., responsible for the manufacture and sale in the United States of the Zonophone products under the Victor Talking Machine Company's control.

### THE ELEPHONE RECORDS



Universal Talking Machine Company's recording studios were established at 3 Scrutton Street, Finsbury, London E.C. It was there that the company's British recordings were most probably taken, and probably with the aid of the Lyrophonwerke A.G.'s experts who came across from Germany for each recording session. The company's discs were issued as ELEPHONE RECORDS, only in the 10" size as far as is known. The first Universal company had applied for the word ELEPHONE to be registered as a trade mark on January 29th 1908 to cover for talking machines but, as the company then resolved to wind up its affairs during the three months waiting period before registration could take place, it did not pursue the registration and did not pay the fee. The old Universal company re-applied for the mark on 23rd March 1908, but with its cover enlarged to encompass machines, parts, accessories, and records. The application passed to the new company, and was registered to that company in June 1908. On 3rd June 1908 the new company also applied for ELEPHONE RECORD, in the form of its disc record

label, as another mark to be registered. It was so registered in the following November. A feature of the label was that it depicted an elephant. It may be that therein lies the explanation of why the earliest issues of Jumbo Records are found without the familiar elephant's head on their labels: they may also be found with the elephant's head having been printed but then having suffered a gouging out process.

In June 1908 Willie Barraud acquired 200 ordinary and 800 preference shares in Universal, of which he was still Secretary, paying 12s.6d on each. He thereby became the company's second largest shareholder. The company resolved not to offer shares to the public.

The Elephone Record label was printed in gold and black on a turquoise blue paper. Central above the spindle hole was depicted an Indian elephant showing an upraised trunk bifurcated at the end(s). Both ends terminated as gramophone horns from which emanated musical notes. The notes were listened to by some by-standers. An Indian, seated in a covered howdah, rides the elephant. The whole picture certainly



illustrated the commercial interest of Aldridge, Salmon and Co., and the Universal Talking Machine Company, with the Indian market.

To my knowledge there were at least three European sources for the Elephone Records' catalogue, or catalogues, not yet seen, which were of British, French and German recordings. The British recordings show a five digit matrix number prefixed with a diminutive 'o', a characteristic of the Lyrophonwerke A.G.'s recordings. The German and French recordings do not show such a prefix, and although Lyrophonwerke may have taken the recordings, under Universal's objectives, any business could have been commissioned to provide the company with recordings. The French recordings show a suffix 'F' to their matrix numbers. They were generally of first class artistes connected with the Paris Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, and other leading French musical establishments. I know very little of the German repertoire on Elephone Records, and I await any information concerning any ethnic Indian recordings.

The business moved to 37 Curtain Road, London E.C. in November 1908. By March 1909 more money was required to keep the business going and a £2,000 mortgage debenture was created. It was taken up by Aldridge, Salmon & Co. Ltd., and gave them the power to appoint Cecil Smith as a receiver of the Universal Talking Machine Co. Ltd. on 6th June 1909. Cecil Smith was a director of both companies. A Mr. W.H.R. Neller was appointed as the liquidator of the business.

There was an interference in the voluntary winding up of the company when Messrs. Nier & Elmer, Cycle and Motor Lamps, as creditors, petitioned the Courts to have Universal wound up compulsorily on 14th June. They were supported by Neller the liquidator, E. Paillard et Cie, the Swiss talking machine manufacturers, the new Rena Manufacturing Co. Ltd., and by Lyrophonwerke A.G. of Germany. With a supporting affidavit of 6th October, and a Creditor's Meeting already having been held in August, the Court made an Order for the company to be wound up, and approved the appointment of Neller, the provisional liquidator.

An enquirer to one of the trade periodicals, published in November 1909,

was informed that the 'Elephone Universal Machine' was a reliable instrument and that the Elephone Records were also of 'good quality' but it was believed that the manufacturer had gone out of business. In December 1909 G.R. Bowron, trading in the Edgware Road, London, advertised that he had bought up all the existing stocks of Elephone Records, and that lists were available upon application. A report of January 1910 concerning a meeting of shareholders and creditors at The Board of Trade offices in Carey Street, London, said those attending were informed that when the company had been formed in May 1908 it had had the particular objective of obtaining a repertoire of Indian songs, but the business had traded at a loss throughout, and the position in which the company found itself was chiefly attributable to the failure of the Indian repertoire. The liquidator was not released from his duties until February 1911.

#### THE PROGRESS OF WILLIAM ANDREW BARRAUD

Having lost his company secretaryship, William Barraud set up in business on his own account and began trading under the name of the Universal Disc Machine and Record Company, dealing in imported Lyrophonwerke A.G. machines and disc records from Germany. By July 1910 he was trading under the name of the Universal Talking Machine Company from his address at 69 Clifton Street, Finsbury, London E.C. The following month, for business reasons, he changed his trading name again to that of W.A. Barraud & Co. He was now an appointed agent for the German-made Dacapo Records, which had been on sale in Germany since August 1907.

10" double-sided Dacapo Records were to be sold at 2s.6d each, with the "Latest Titles, Best Artistes and Grandest Repertoire" - "New Lists of Titles Every Month" - "Dacapo Needles of the Finest Quality". William Barraud, then 59 years old, was busily appointing factors for Dacapo Records for the new 1910-1911 season. Previously, at the end of June 1910, a list of 300 titles on Dacapo Records (including a British repertoire)

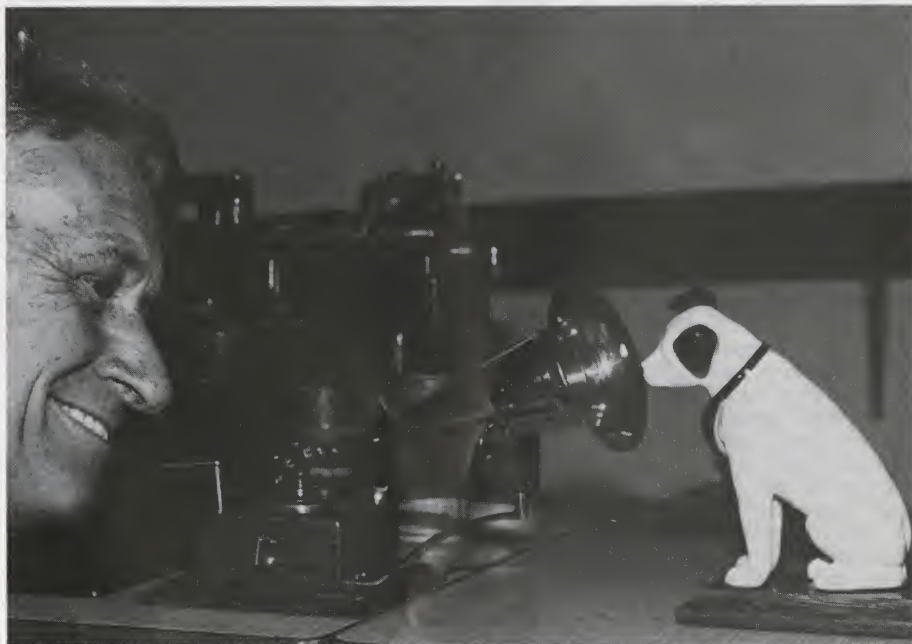


should have been available through the agency of a M.W.J. Wisener for "Britain and the Colonies", but William Barraud appears to have supplanted him as Agent and the 300 titles could not have arrived in June as Barraud had only 250 titles in September. Among those were 40 British recordings, and if they had been intended for the June list the recordings must have been taken in the first week in May 1910 at the latest. A Dacapo Records Catalogue became available from W.A. Barraud & Co. in October 1910 and the November supplement included recordings of "Grand Opera Titles by the Greatest Operatic Continental Singers": well, that is how Bruno Dessau, tenor, Frederico Barbarlonga, baritone, and Frances Renolde, soprano, were described!

#### THE 10" EMPIRE RECORDS

In May 1911 Mr. Philip Waldman, who had been trading as the International Record Company, Cowley Road in the City of Oxford, with a branch of the business

in Swindon, Wiltshire, formed a new business in partnership with a Mr. A.J. Barton which took over the existing business under the name of the Empire Record Company. It has not been possible to discover if the Waldman companies sold records through retail outlets or whether they operated a "tally-man" business whereby customers contracted to buy a given number of disc records per annum (around the fifty mark) for which they received a free gramophone, already on loan, at the completion of the contract. As the Empire Records were never advertised in the trade periodicals, this mode of business is suspected. The records dealt in were "Empire Records". They were pressings from Dacapo Records, with slate-blue and gold labels, whereas Dacapo Records had green and gold labels. Empires were issued with the same artist credits and the Dacapo Records catalogue and matrix numbers. To what extent W.A. Barraud was involved in this secondary use of the Dacapo



Frank Andrews and Nipper admiring Miles Mallinson's miniature working "Dog Model" gramophone at the 1987 C.L.P.G.S. Phonofair, Malvern.

Records' repertoire, if at all, is not clear. By allowing his appointed dealers an extra four shillings in the pound discount in August 1911 William Barraud enabled them to advertise the Dacapo Records in their catchment areas more widely.

For the commencement of the new 1911-1912 season in September, W.A. Barraud & Co. took on the sole agency in England for the gramophone, gramophone motors, tone-arms, and sound-boxes of the Swiss manufacturers, Jaccard Frères of St. Croix.

The Barraud business was moved to No.1 New Inn Yard, Great Eastern Street, London E.C. in November 1911. At that period "The London Dacapo Orchestra" was that which had been assembled by Victor Opferman, the violinist. He had recorded in 1897 for J.E. Hough's 'London Records', a product of Edison Ltd., the new name of the former London Phonograph Company. Victor Opferman had been a successful student at the Guildhall School of Music in London. During the war (only three years away) he changed his name to Willis for obvious reasons, and he recorded once again under his new name.

Empire Records were still being pressed from the latest recordings issued in the Dacapo Record supplements.

#### W.A. BARRAUD LIMITED

On 12th January 1912 the Barraud business was converted into a private joint-stock company, as W.A. Barraud Limited, with a nominal capital of £1,000 in £1 shares. Only two shares were paid for. Willie bought one share and 799 others were allotted to himself in consideration for handing over his business to the company. He was now 60 years old. The other 200 shares went to his junior partner, Albert J. Barton, who had been (and perhaps continued to be) Philip Waldman's partner in the 'Empire Record Company' enterprise. The Barraud business remained at New Inn Yard, No.1 becoming the registered office. An incident, reported in February 1912, concerned six wax master recordings destined for processing at the Dacapo

Record G.m.b.H. works in Germany. They had been so brittle that on arrival in Berlin they all broke in half, necessitating the titles' re-recording in London.

Charles Penrose, the comedian who gained world-wide fame with his mid-nineteen-twenties recording of "The Laughing Policeman" for Columbia Records, was said (in March 1912) to have made his first recordings for Dacapo Records. They were issued on the May 1912 supplement. March 1912 saw the first issues of 12" Dacapo Records for the British catalogue. They were to sell at 4s.0d each, in contrast to the 10" size which sold for 2s.6d each. The 12" discs were given a 2001 and onwards catalogue number series, whereas the 10" size had begun at No.1. There were then 351 of those in the catalogue.

If any member has any of the following Dacapo Records or knows what was recorded upon them I would be most grateful to hear about them with full details. **TEN INCH** Nos. 34, 35, 37, 38, 62, 63, 64, 66, 69, 70, 76, 78, 80, 81, 83, 85, 87, 90, 92, 93, 94, 96, 117, 131, 145, 146, 147, 152, 153, 157, 160 to 164, 166, 167, 168, 176, 178, 524, 525, 526, 528, 529, 530, 625, 626, and 721 and beyond. **TWELVE INCH** 2048, 2050 and beyond. They must be Dacapo Records with labels in English.

June 1912 saw the introduction of German-made 10" disc records onto the British market priced at only 1s.6d each: the Coliseum Record and the Scala Record. As a consequence other manufacturers, or their agents, were constrained to consider a reduction in their prices if they wished to maintain their holds on the market. For the new 1912-1913 season W.A. Barraud reduced the prices of Dacapo Records to 2s.0d. for the 10" size and to 3s.0d for the 12", but that September 1912 Dacapo Records advertisement proved to be the last to come from New Inn Yard. There were none in the trade periodicals in October 1912. The Barraud agency had been terminated, for what reason we know not. (To Be Continued)



# The Manhattan Opera

by George Taylor

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN'S AMBITION was always to put on Grand Opera. He achieved it between 1906 and 1910 with the Manhattan Opera, engaging a multitude of singers drawn largely from Europe but also from American talent. Many of these singers were the highest stars in the operatic firmament: Nellie Melba, Luisa Tetrazzini, Mary Garden and Emma Calvé among the women; Bonci, Renaud and Zenatello among the men. But there were also lesser luminaries, many of them enjoying a fine reputation in their time but now known only to the collector of old records, or to the opera history buff. This article considers five of these lesser lights and the records they made.

First, an outline history of the Manhattan Opera. By the turn of the century the impresario Oscar Hammerstein had built and run a number of theatres in New York whose staple fare was drama, music hall turns, vaudeville, and on occasions, grand opera. His aim had always been to stage grand opera, starting in New York and then extending to other cities in the States. In his theatrical dealings he had encountered Heinrich Conried, then an actor, and for reasons that are not clear, he and Conried had fallen out. In 1903 Conried had become the director of the Metropolitan Opera, an appointment which irked Hammerstein more than most events of the day. The Met had been founded in 1882 and was supported by the high society of New York, for whom Hammerstein had little regard. By the turn of the century the Met, while still enjoying the services of some of the most distinguished singers, was rather in the doldrums, with uninspired conducting and a less than sparkling chorus. In part the Met had become a little complacent, and was enjoying what was essentially a monopoly.

Hammerstein resolved to establish some competition. The new Manhattan Opera House was a show piece with excellent acoustics. The eminent conductor Cleofonte Campanini was engaged. Hammerstein's singers included some of the world's best, as we have seen. His chorus was young and competent; his operas were well staged and rehearsed, and the result was that the Met felt the competition, and lost money, while Hammerstein was in the black.

Hammerstein's success caused the

management of the Met to take stock and remedy the situation. In early 1908 Conried was replaced by Gatti-Casazza, and Arturo Toscanini became chief conductor. The staging of operas was improved in other ways too. Meanwhile Hammerstein overreached himself by trying to run an opera house in Philadelphia concurrently with the Manhattan operation. Financial difficulties ensued from which he emerged only by agreeing with the Met to abandon presenting opera in New York for ten years. So after four seasons the Manhattan Opera closed down. Its offerings had been well received by the public and it had been adventurous in staging not only the old war horses (generally with Tetrazzini) but also new works such as those of the French school in which Mary Garden and leading French singers such as Maurice Renaud had been such a sensation in Europe. The Manhattan Opera had also had a salutary refreshing effect on the Metropolitan Opera, which went on from strength to strength.

And now for the five lesser stars who contributed to the success of the Manhattan Opera. The Swiss mezzo Clotilde Bressler-Gianoli (1874-1912) sang with the Manhattan Opera during the first three seasons. She had made her debut, aged 17, in 1891 in Geneva in 'Samson and Dalila', a ripe part for a seventeen-year-old. Her European career was quite successful and she appeared at La Scala, Milan, among other houses. She was particularly impressive as Carmen in Paris, and she recorded two arias from that opera for Odeon in 1906, both of them subsequently reissued by the IRCC. It might have been her achievement in Carmen that induced Hammerstein to sign

her on. In any event she was a stunning success in New York in the role, one of the greatest ever known in the city. Her voice had a dark timbre and she sang the music as written, with none of the changes common among sopranos who try the part. She made no effort to look different from the other cigarette girls - the New York Times remarked that of the entire factory staff she was the shabbiest - but her impression on the stage must have been singularly forceful. Later she took part with Mary Garden in the American première of 'Louise' at the Manhattan and, after that, she sang in Philadelphia and Chicago, repeating her success as Carmen. Apart from her two Odeons I know of no other recordings.

The American mezzo, Eleonora de Cisneros (1878-1934) was christened Eleanor Broadfoot and appeared at the Met under that name in the 1899-1900 season. She went to Europe where Jean de Reszké was involved in her singing studies, and in 1901 she married Count Francesco de Cisneros, presumably Hispanifying her Christian name at the same time. After further studies in Paris with de Reszké and Maurel, she had a distinguished career in Italian opera houses, singing in the première of Strauss's 'Elektra' at La Scala in 1909. She sang with the Manhattan Opera in all four seasons and was a success in the standard mezzo and contralto roles. She later sang in Philadelphia and also with the San Carlo Opera. Her large and dramatic voice was captured in many recordings: G and T and Nicole in London (1904); Columbia, Pathé, American Columbia (1915); and Edison cylinders and discs. Most of these records are operatic, but there was a fair sprinkling of songs and ballads, including two of Amy Woodforde-Finden's Indian Love Lyrics (on Pathé, 1916) as I have mentioned elsewhere.

The Canadian soprano Pauline Donalda (1882-1970) studied in Montreal and Paris. She made her début in 'Manon' in 1904 and sang in Brussels in the 1905-6 season. In 1906 she married the French baritone Paul Seveilhac. She sang at Covent Garden and had guest appearances at many opera houses worldwide. She sang with Manhattan Opera during the first season only (along

with her husband). The reviews were hardly ecstatic but they improved as the season went on. It has been stated that she had a beautiful lyric soprano voice and she was evidently quite an attractive woman. Nevertheless, she and her husband were not re-engaged after the first season. She sang with the San Carlo Opera in 1915-16 and finished her operatic career at Covent Garden in 1921-22. She taught in Paris until 1937 and retired to Montreal. She made a reasonable number of records for G & T on their prestigious red label series in 1907, in arias from 'Faust' and 'La Bohème', the former being reissued by the IRCC. Further Gramophone Company recordings were made in 1908. Donalda claimed that these records did not do her justice. Nevertheless, one of them (her Pagliacci arias) was issued by Victor in the States, and most, if not all, were also issued in Canada. In 1917 she recorded the Card Scene from 'Carmen' for Emerson; not the most prestigious label - the record sold for twenty-five cents!

The Italian soprano Emma Trentini (1878-1959) studied, curiously enough, in Munich. She was a big hit at La Scala in Franchetti's 'Germania' in 1904, and sang at Covent Garden in 1905, one of her roles being Musetta in 'La Bohème'. She repeated that success at the Manhattan Opera, where she sang during the first three seasons. Later she went into operetta, appearing in Victor Herbert's 'Naughty Marietta' in New York. Her love of money was notorious. One day Hammerstein nailed a half-dollar to the floor near her dressing room and then watched with glee as she tried to dislodge it. She collected free hotel soap when on tour and later returned to Europe with five large boxes full of it. She was a prolific recorder, with two Nicles recorded in London in 1904, and many G & Ts recorded in Milan a year or so later. However, Musetta's aria (the famous waltz song) did not appear until 1907, on American Columbia, perhaps recorded in response to Trentini's reception in the role in New York.

Another Italian soprano, Alice Zeppilli (1884-?) made her début in Venice in 1905 and also sang at Covent Garden in 1907. She sang with the



Manhattan Opera in the last three seasons, scoring a great success as Olympia in 'Tales of Hoffman', an innovation on the New York scene. Later she sang in Chicago and appeared at the Opéra Comique in Paris. She was much appreciated at Monte Carlo as a singer and teacher. In the 20s she sang with the San Carlo company, appearing in 'Tales of Hoffman' but as Giulietta, not

Olympia. In 1912 she recorded an aria from 'Tales' and also the Gavotte from 'Manon'.

So here were five singers quite successful and highly regarded in their day but not so well known now. With the possible exception of de Cisneros I would imagine their records are rare; but it would be interesting to hear them.

## From the Chair

**E**VERY YEAR WE TRY to arrange the Society's affairs so that any changes within the Society coincide with the Annual General Meeting. However, rarely a year goes by without having to make some changes. This year is no exception. Our first and major change concerns **The Hillandale News** itself. Ted Cunningham, who has been closely associated with our Journal for a number of years, has indicated that he wishes to hand on the editorship to someone else.

Ted's decision is a blow to every member of our Society, as he has been responsible for the remarkable transformation of the **Hillandale News** in recent years. Under his editorship the Journal reached new levels of professionalism in both production and format. Perhaps more important, Ted brought a new and refreshing style to the magazine, lighthearted yet at the same time perceptive and subtle. He has also demonstrated that he is a dedicated connoisseur of his subject with a knowledge that few can surpass. Members of the Society cannot possibly know or appreciate the time, effort and commitment he brought to the task of editor.

We are all very sad that he has chosen to step down, and hope that in its present form the Hillandale will remain a fitting tribute to his untiring efforts over recent years.

Our new editor is to be Charles

Levin, currently the Society's Secretary. Charles brings much enthusiasm and commitment to the editorial chair and he will I am sure have the support and confidence of the membership in undertaking this difficult task.

Our new Secretary is Suzanne Lewis, a longstanding member of the Committee and a former Secretary of the Society. Suzanne's knowledge of our affairs provides us with a continuity that is I feel important during a time of change.

One other change has to be announced. I am going to be undertaking a six months period of work in the USA from July to December of this year. In the normal course of events no one would miss the Chairman for that length of time. However our Vice-Chairman, Ken Loughland, has still not recovered sufficiently from his recent bout of ill-health and is unable to undertake the duties of the Chair during my absence. In order to overcome this problem the Committee, with Ken's support, created the post of a second Vice-Chairman. Our Committee member Chris Hamilton was the Committee's unanimous choice to fill this post. It will of course be an acting position until the AGM in September.

So, my congratulations to the new Office holders and my thanks and good wishes to Ted for all he has done for the Society.

Peter Martland, Chairman

# A Musical Shoe Box

by Miles Mallinson



SOME YEARS AGO I GAVE an exhibition and demonstration of some of my old phonographs and gramophones in the local museum. During this time I was interviewed several times by the local press and radios. As a result of this publicity I received several letters and telephone calls. Among them was a call from an elderly gentleman stating that he had a 'bit' of an old phonograph if it was any good to me. I thanked him, and promised that I would call and see him. I did not know what that 'bit' of phonograph was until I called on him some days later.

The elderly gentleman asked me into his home and eventually brought the mysterious object to me. It was a rather rough-looking wooden box, covered in dust and dirt, and was on the point of falling apart, as the nails holding it together had rusted away. However, on the front could be made out a Banner, a Bell, and the words "Edison Bell Gem". It was clear that it had had a busy life over its many years. The old man spoke: "I can remember my Father taking t'works out of it when I was a bit of a lad. They weren't much good to anyone yerssee, so he chucked 'em away. But he kept t'box, as it might come in useful. It did! It was used as a shoe-polish box until my wife died last year, after which I sold t'house and moved into this little bungalow. I brought this here box wi' me and its been in't loft ever since, as I don't go out any more and I don't need

it for my shoes."

I looked down and saw that he was wearing house slippers. He went on: "I heard you on't wireless t'other day, and it fair brought back memories to me. When I thought of that old box up there in't loft, I thought it might come in useful if you can find all't missing parts, so I rang you."

I thanked the old man for his thoughtfulness and left, promising that if I ever did find all those bits and restored the machine to its original state, I would show it to him.

So now I had the bottom half of a case for an Edison Bell Gem, but as I had never seen a complete one difficulty would be experienced in replacing the missing parts.



The box was repaired and cleaned up, and stayed in my workshop, where it was used for storing small parts of phonographs. Then in June 1989 I was asked by an elderly couple who lived in Cambridge if I could have a look at two phonographs which had been accidentally dropped when bringing them from their loft. My wife and I called on this wonderful old couple in August, and saw the phonographs, which needed repair. One was an Edison Bell Gem! It was minus the handle and the horn and was damaged from being dropped. On returning from our holidays in Germany we called at Cambridge again and returned home with the phonographs.

Much study was needed for the repairs and the manufacture of replacement parts. I cleaned up the Edison Bell Gem and inspected the damage. It was mainly restricted to the reproducer, the lead screw, and its drive gear, and could be dealt with without too much trouble. The castings were complete but had at some time been very roughly 'painted'. I was glad about that as there was no valuable surface to retain. I therefore plugged all the holes in the castings and filled up the surface with an epoxy filler to increase the dimensions to those required of a Pattern. Then I sent the castings off to the foundry for a spare set for myself.

The Edison Bell Gem motor, although basically the same as that fitted to the Edison Gem, is not entirely the same. The governor is part of the motor, unlike the Edison machine, where the governor is fitted between the motor and the case, making the insulation of the motor noise impossible. To prevent the motor from being so wide the governor is driven from the pulley side, straddling the end of the motor. There are other differences as well, including the 'stop-start' control, the speed adjusting screw, and the removable winding handle, all of which resemble those on the Edison Standard of the year (1903).

The actual gears are identical to the Edison Gem except that they are made of bronze rather than steel. I cannot understand why the British chose to use bronze as it is rather expensive, and any saving in time due to higher cutting

speeds during gear cutting would not have made them any great profit.

Generally the layout of the Edison Bell Gem has been well thought out, and is an improvement over the Edison Gem. On the other side of the coin, however, the Edison beats the English machine hands down in the quality of its castings, machining and finish. When first brought out in 1904 the Edison Bell Gem cost £2.5s.0d (£2.25) or for a super de-luxe cabinet model £2.15.0d (£2.75), whereas the Edison machine was advertised at £2.15.0d (£2.75) in its only form at that time.

In producing the motor parts I had to measure very accurately the gear details (diameters, pitch and form of teeth; the centre distances of each pair of gears), and the spindle lengths and diameters. Detail drawings were produced from these calculations and then special tools and fixtures were manufactured. These included gear cutting tools. Involute cutters, even if they are available, are extremely expensive. I therefore cut my gears in the same way as the clockmakers of the early part of the last century, using a hand-ground "fly" cutter, which makes cutting very slow and weary. To obtain the number of teeth on the gears and to give them accurate spacing I have the advantage of a milling machine and a dividing head. One of those gears has 190 teeth, and nearly drove me crazy before I completed it, one tooth at a time. The motor contains three gears and three pinions; then there are three more gears on the leadscrew drive train. The ratchet pawl on the Bell machine is much closer in design to that of a clock pawl than the rather crude one on the American Gem.

When the castings arrived I cleaned up the roughnesses due to the joining of the moulds during casting, marked out the position for the 27 drillings in the top-plate, the 18 in the motor frames, 3 in the end gate and 7 more in the carrier arm. Of course, the motor frames were drilled and reamed as a pair, so as to keep the alignment of the spindles correct. Unlike the Edison product these body castings require no milling, as all the alignments are gained by the use of

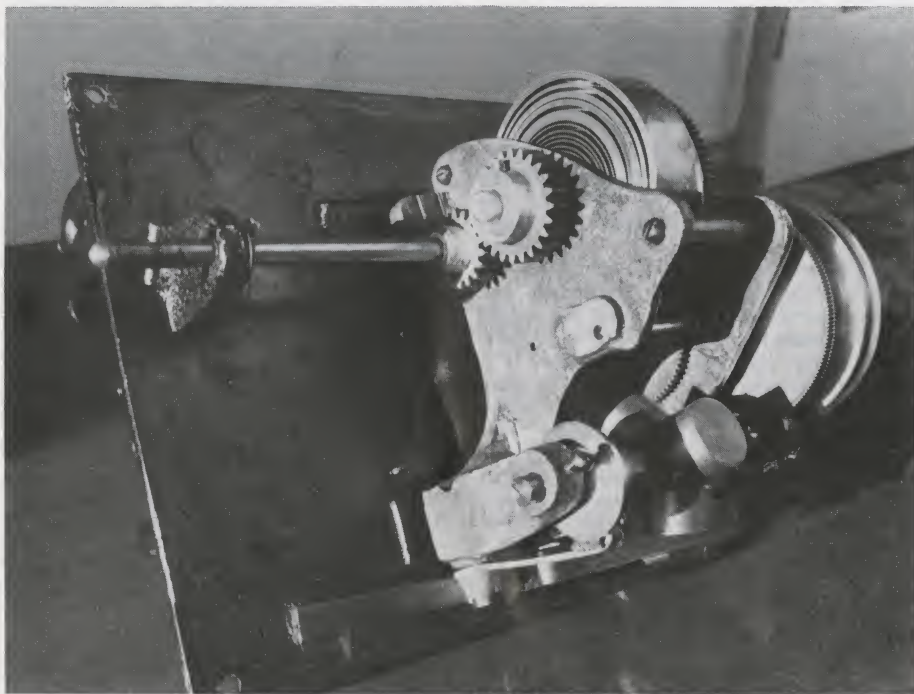
guide-rods, so reducing the machining to drilling, reaming and tapping. All the screw threads are Whitworth, unlike the American equivalent, which makes their replacements a lot easier, as taps and dies are readily available in this country.

Cutting the leadscrew, which has 50 threads to the inch (T.P.I.) is not normally possible on an English lathe, but some time ago I cut a special gear for the leadscrew drive which now makes it possible to cut both 50 and 100 T.P.I. screws (that is, if the poor single point tool can stand up to the job of cutting the very tough leadscrew blank without losing its edge).

The finishing-off of the castings was as follows. Firstly they were dressed up with a file and a 'flapwheel', before priming and filling with spray cellulose, and rubbing down with 240 grade wet-and-dry abrasive paper. When the surface was smooth, dry and hard, it was hand-painted with an oil-based gold lining pen by the Mitsubishi Pencil Co.

Ltd. of Japan, called 'Uni-Marker PX 202'. (The Pentel pen I recommended in a previous article seems to be no longer available). The castings were now given a clear varnish as a lacquer and finished off using a very fine wire wool.

The patents plate and the Edison Bell "Penny" had to be made. I removed the plate from the original (Cambridge) machine, which was to be repaired and painted. I photostatted it in enlarged form several times in sequence until I had a print of approximately 14 inches long. I dressed up this rather woolly-looking print using a white Tippex correction pen for the white letters and a black nylon-tipped pen for the black background. This was then photographed to get a 'one-to-one' transparency for the final stage of photo-engraving onto the nickel plate. The engraved plate was then painted all over with black cellulose and finally rubbed down with metal polish until the lettering showed through the paint. The holes were drilled in it and its edges were cut to





size and dressed up. Two special soft brass rivets had to be made and nickel-plated before the plate could be positioned on the top casting, its holes drilled through and the rivets fitted and closed over. The "penny" was kindly given to me, but as the other machine required one (they usually do) I fitted it to that one and made another for my own machine. An original Penny was lent to me from which I made a latex rubber mould, by melting the latex and pouring it over the penny. The copy was made of a mixture of epoxy resin, bronze powder, and a catalyst hardener poured into the mould, resulting in a penny that only very close scrutiny would detect from the original. After brightening up its high- lights I glued it into the recess in the top-plate casting. The last parts I had to make were the very unusual ball-shaped nuts which hold the top-plate onto the box.

On assembly of the phonograph there was a fair amount of adjustment necessary to the meshing of the gears. These adjustments are mentioned in the "Talking Machine News" of February 1904, when a review of the manufacturing processes of the machine was printed following its initial production run. The above adjustments, which are not possible on the American Gem, make this machine noticeably quieter than its competitor. Other differences which improve the performance of this model include a very much heavier mandrel, resulting in a better flywheel effect. On the original machine it was made from a diecasting alloy but I made mine from 2mm thick brass, rolled and brazed together before machining the correct taper on the lathe and then plating it. The top-plate and motor are insulated from the box by rubber washers, which of course makes it much quieter. The half nut on the "Gem" is replaced by a hardened wheel, which is made to the thread form of the



leadscrew and runs in the thread rather than rubbing along it, saving energy.

The spring, horn, and 'New Model' reproducer are all new reproductions bought from specialist manufacturers, members of our Society who advertise in our magazine.

This little machine gave me much pleasure and satisfaction during its manufacture, and I hope it will give as much pleasure during use.

A final and rather sad note. As I had originally promised to return with this machine to the old gentleman who gave me the "shoe-box" if I ever completed it, I returned to him on January 6th this year, and found out that he had passed away on November 26th last year.

# PLAYBACK

by Peter Copeland

**H**ISTORY'S JUDGEMENT ON Thomas Edison has both positive and negative sides. On the one hand he was a gifted inventor-technologist: on the other he was an exclusively practical man, so theory played little part in his thinking. CLPGS members thank him for developing the first way to record and reproduce sound, but we all regret that he didn't put it to better cultural use.

When I was reading Gelatt's book "The Fabulous Phonograph", it occurred to me there might be a simple physical reason for the latter "negative". I haven't seen the idea in print before, and I'm quite prepared for someone to shoot me down, but consider these two quotes by Edison in Gelatt's book.

1. "Every accompanist", he said, "tends to spoil the song. Accompanists should only be heard between the parts."
2. (Explaining the better quality of Edison recordings): "Being deaf," he wrote in 1925, "my knowledge of sounds had been developed till it was extensive, and I knew that I was not and no one else was getting overtones. Others working in the same field did not realise this imperfection, because they were not deaf."

These quotations have given rise to much fruitless discussion about what Edison was trying to convey. We do know that Edison had poor hearing sensitivity. There are many stories about how an argument would appear to be in progress, when all that was happening was that everyone else was shouting to communicate with him. Yet, on its own, low sensitivity would (if anything) oppose the thoughts behind the two quotations above. So here is my theory. The ossicles in Edison's middle-ears caused large levels of intermodulation distortion.

There are some lovely nouns in that sentence! Allow me to explain. "Ossicles" is the collective noun for the tiny bones of the middle ear which convey sound from the ear-drum to the cochlea where the nerve-endings are, and also act as an "impedence transformer"

exactly like the lever system in an acoustic soundbox. But "intermodulation distortion" is rather more complicated. When we say a recording is "distorted", nowadays we generally mean it suffers from "harmonic distortion". This happens when the "transfer characteristic", the relationship between the shape of an input waveform and that coming off the record, isn't linear. This deforms the shape of the wave, and creates extra "harmonics" at frequencies which are multiples of the original. When harmonic distortion happens to a violin playing an A at 440Hz, extra notes become added at 880 Hz, and so on up to infinity. To a large extent this doesn't matter, because a violin string produces harmonics (or "overtones") at these frequencies anyway, and all we are doing is enhancing the harmonic content of the instrument. Trouble occurs only when we get to the seventh harmonic at 3080 Hz, because this frequency bears no musical relationship to the fundamental. In Edison's time, the eleventh and thirteenth harmonics were mitigated by the "filtering" effect of imperfect high-frequency response, which counteracted the harshness.

In practice "harmonic distortion" is accompanied by "intermodulation distortion". This is another side-effect of a non-linear transfer characteristic, but it only causes trouble when two or more notes are sounding at the same time. Suppose two separate violinists play a minor third, comprising the A and the C above it. This will result in two frequencies, 440 Hz and 523 Hz. We get enhanced harmonics to each note as before, but we will also get intermodulation products. "Sum-and-difference" frequencies will now appear. The worst problem is an extra note at 523 Hz minus 440 Hz = 83 Hz, which bears no musical relationship at all to anything. Being low-pitched it is not "masked" by the music. Difference-tones are very noticeable. When we say a record is "blasting" that is what we usually mean. Summation-tones are also produced, both from the fundamentals (at 963 Hz), and from the harmonics (1403 Hz, 1486 Hz, 1926 Hz, etc.). These tones are also non-musical, but they are usually less loud, and being in the same range as the natural harmonics they are



more easily masked, so the subjective effect is not usually so important.

Intermodulation can be generated without harmonics. A very simple circuit, called a "ring modulator" and comprising only four diodes, can do it. The voices for The Daleks in "Doctor Who" were done this way. The resulting harsh distortion is ideal for portraying an alien intelligence about to exterminate you, but it is quite out of place in ordinary music.

This has to be a somewhat brief account of intermodulation distortion, so if you want to pursue the matter further, I recommend the chapter on "Acoustics" in the Oxford Companion to Music (for non-technical readers) or Chapters 7 to 10 of "Second Thoughts on Radio Theory" by 'Cathode Ray' of Wireless World (for technical readers). I shall now expound MY conclusions.

The ossicles can also cause intermodulation distortion. Most of the time our brains adapt to it, but we do notice it under extreme conditions. If you have the misfortune to be near a policeman when he blows his whistle, the two intense high-pitched notes emitted from the orifices on either side intermodulate, and create a lower-pitched sensation which appears much louder. Thus the policeman doesn't have to carry something the size of a bugle. The further away you are, the more the "blasting" effect turns into a discordant "beat tone". The difficulty I am having in describing the two different effects

illustrates my point that individual brains adapt themselves differently.

My theory is that Edison suffered from excess intermodulation distortion in his ossicles. This would account for his reluctance to allow the singer and the accompaniment to perform at the same time, because intermodulation only happens when two or more notes are sounding at once. This explains quotation (1). The theory is reinforced when you consider the known historical fact that he judged the performance of his recordings by biting into a reproducing cabinet with his teeth. (His machine still survives at West Orange with his teeth-marks on the edge). Sound was therefore conveyed to his cochleas by bone-conduction. This method of reproduction would favour the bass notes; indeed, it would permit reproduction down to an even lower frequency than could be radiated into the air, and thus "blasting" on the record would be much more noticeable. Furthermore, blasting would be less masked by the musical harmonics if he also had insensitive airborne hearing. The theory even explains why he preferred judging recordings through his teeth, rather than taking the obvious step of increasing the loudness, as other inventors tried to do; his middle ear was bypassed. Thus we now have a completely logical explanation for his otherwise opaque quotation No.2.

I am a physicist, not a physician, by upbringing, so I don't know how this suggestion would strike a hearing expert. Would anyone out there like to comment?

## **London Meetings**

19th June

DOMINIC COMBE: A Cylinder Programme using a Model 'B' Fireside Phonograph

17th July

GEOFF EDWARDS: Home and Away

Both the above-mentioned meetings held on Tuesdays at 7.00 p.m. at  
The Bloomsbury Institute, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W.C.2

The following meeting held at Neasden Lane Methodist Church Centre, London NW10  
Saturday August 4th at 3.00 p.m.

FRANK ANDREWS: Records in Store

# Letters

## Scrolls

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

I have been slow in reading Issue 172 of The Hillandale News. Thus Peter Copeland may by now have received all the correspondence he wants or needs on the use of a Scroll to separate bands. If I understand the exact technique he means, then an example far earlier than the 1923 example he cites would be Elizabeth Wheeler's Victor disc 17004. Side A has two bands, (1) A Dew Drop (Sherman-Gilchrist) and (2) Rain Song (Smith), while side B, entitled "Mother Goose #1" includes five well-known nursery rhymes set to their conventional tunes.

This may well have been the first use of the scroll by the Victor Company, as not much earlier (at least in catalogue number sequence) their 16863 had couplings without any visible separation on both sides. Side A is by Henry Allan Price (1) The Moo Cow Moo (2) His New Brother; while side B is Elizabeth Wheeler doing "Mother Goose Songs #3". Interestingly, the earlier Mother Goose side contains six songs reduced to five on the other, I assume to make room for the spacing. The presentation of five was recorded (or re-presented?) in a different order from the larger set.

I also have Mrs. Wheeler's 12" Victor 35225, also with separation bands, in this case about double the width of the separations on the 10". Side A is "Mother Goose Songs" (no number, so I assume there is a Mother Goose #2 out there somewhere) containing five other rhymes. Side B is a set of six "Vowel Songs."

Best regards, John Baldwin  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 4th March

## Shackleton's Cylinder

Dear Ted,

In view of the recent material in Hillandale regarding Ernest Shackleton and his Edison cylinder, perhaps readers should be informed of the facts about this record. The Edison "cash books"

(payment logs maintained at the Company's recording studios at 79 Fifth Avenue, New York City) reveal that Shackleton's record was made there on 6th April 1910, and that he was paid \$500.00 for it, an astonishing sum for a single record at that time. One wonders if the Company recouped its cost other than in publicity value. The record seems quite scarce. While I have not done a survey, I have never heard of more than two copies surviving in collections, although there are surely more than that.

Best, Bill Bryant  
Portland, Maine, 16th March

## On the Dark Side

Dear Editor,

I must pass comment on Peter Copeland's article "Why are records black?" I can assure you, as one who worked in the record industry for 14 years, that the main reason is **MARKETING**. It was well established decades ago the **customer** much preferred the black shiny disc to any other.

Peter concludes "when various fancy-coloured picture discs appeared in the 1980s . . ." May I quote from an article I wrote in October 1960? (Mention had been made of the 'Filmophone' coloured, transparent record of pre-war days):

"Also seen recently, but manufactured originally before the war, is a disc consisting of stiff cardboard covered on one side or both sides with a wafer-thin pressing. These two examples I am familiar with are 78s, and I assume were made in this form for economy rather than novelty. Probably better known is a disc of usual thickness with the added attraction of a coloured picture covering the whole of each side." (I was referring to a make known as ASISCO/SATURN - and passed on to other matters). Also there was the matter of the sheer economics of pressing discs with various coloured powders. The pressing plant would have to keep in stock a variety of specially-prepared coloured plastics instead of just the one, in black.



Finally, regarding Peter's interpretation of the use of the Buchmann-Meyer system: He says of it: "If one measured the apparent widening of the reflected beam, they proved it was proportional to the velocity of the (cutting) stylus".

Well, not exactly. The Buchmann-Meyer test could be performed on a static disc without rotating on the turntable; so zero velocity. What was measured was **amplitude** of cut - this is proportional to r.m.s. velocity at any one frequency, but it was just this important characteristic that was being measured, that is, the relative response of the system over frequency range for an input of given power. The significance of this was the all-important Frequency Response Curve (e.g., Decca, U.S. Columbia, EMI, etc.) which varied so much until the standardised frequency curves arrived later.

Yours sincerely, H.Barry Raynaud  
Formerly Design and Development Engineer  
Pye Records, London  
N.Wembley 8th April

### Useless Information

Dear Ted,

I was delighted to see 'Old Bransby Williams' remembered in Hillandale News, p.296, as I thought that you and I might be the only people alive to know who he was. He would, no doubt, have been surprised to find himself a bedfellow of Sophie Tucker, p.302 same issue.

A snippet of useless information to amaze your readers is that Henry Hall (pp.326-7) had not one, but **two** signature tunes. His "Here's to the Next Time" was his SIGNING-OFF tune, with vocal. His introductory signature tune was "It's just the Time for Dancing" (no vocal). Readers of "The Times" should expect half-information. Your readers don't have to put up with it.

Thanks for the magazine. I find a great deal of the material absolutely rivetting. Things like the Gordon Reid article on CEDAR leave one simply amazed. Apropos of absolutely nothing: I have somewhere a record of what must be one of the earliest examples of

"jazzing the classics": a sort of ragtime arrangement of the Jewel Song from "Faust", played by the Silver Stars Band, I think conducted by Albert W. Ketèlbey (of 'In a Monastery Garden' and 'In a Persian Market' fame) about 1922-ish. The title (and 2½ very small cheers, please, for) MEFOXTROTELES.

Oh boy! Ian Smythe

London W.1.

### Romeo and Hamlet

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

I can offer a footnote to Rick Hardy's interesting piece on Romeo Berti. As a young man just out of school in the late 1960s I went to work in London near Waterloo Station. Some of us would spend our lunchtimes by walking over Hungerford Bridge to listen to the open-air concerts in the Embankment Gardens. From time to time they were given by Romeo Berti and his Cossack Band, or it might have been his Balalaika Orchestra, I can't remember which, but he was certainly the "middle-aged man dressed as a gypsy and playing the violin" described by Mr. Hardy. They played a merry tune and were a welcome alternative to the military bands which then, as now, were generally on offer.

On a different tack, I wonder if anyone can tell me anything of a performer called Will Evans. Described as an English Comic on recordings on 'The Twin' and 'Zonophone Record-The Twin' from the years just before the First World War, I deduce that he was a music-hall comedian. He comes across as a naturally funny man with a distinctive roaring laugh and a seeming speciality in jokes about eggs. (Of Hamlet we get "some people called him omelette but he wasn't an egg merchant, he was a pork butcher - hence the ham". It's funnier when you hear it).

I have never heard of Will Evans in any other context and wonder whether he was well known in his day or just another anonymous performer of the times. Does anyone know?

Yours sincerely, Bob Carlisle

9th April

## Trains of Thought

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

As always, reading the latest "Hillandale News" set trains of thought in motion. The article on Guy d'Hardelot produced memories of the naughty fun Arthur Askey made of this curious sounding name and then, when "The Lesson with the Fan" was mentioned, reminiscences flooded back of Beatrice Lillie as Lady Windermere with her explanations of fan language. A propos the Guy d'Hardelot "lesson", this song **was** recorded at least once, by none other than Conchita Supervia on Parlophone RO 20186.

Selecting items from the Parlophone catalogue was always something of a lucky dip in prewar days, and some very odd records were on offer, including one which gives the listener a distinct sinking feeling. Some way into side one of Fucik's 'Marinarella' Overture on E 1441 there is a sickening descent in pitch. As the new key remains doggedly in force thereafter one must assume that the recording machine was initially running at the wrong speed.

I think almost everyone appreciated Semprini, whose death was mentioned. His name first came to my attention on the label of a 10" Decca record (previously Panachord?) on which he conducted La Scala Orchestra in a selection from 'Tosca' although the Decca catalogue assures one that the conductor was Attilio Parelli. Panachord 9003 names no conductor at all, but I assume that this record by La Scala Orchestra was later reissued as Decca K 722.

Another conductor whose name appears on early Decca issues is Arthur Hammond and, memory darting off again, I am reminded of a series of 12" Imperials by the Carl Rosa Opera Company in which Hammond shared the conducting with Richard Austin. These records sold at 2/- (10p) each and were accompanied by leaflets giving cast lists and synopses of the operas. I still have eight of these records but unhappily only one leaflet survives, that for 'Lohengrin' in which the singers were Pauline Maunder, William Boland and Constance Stocker. Probably these singers sang on other Carl Rosa

records but did they, I wonder, make any individual discs?

Basil Cameron also conducted for Decca in their early years of recording, and some of his break-neck speed performances with the Hastings Municipal Orchestra are quite electrifying. They would make good "historic" reissues. The early domestic Decca catalogue contained much surprisingly esoteric material including music from (now) classic French films. Val Rosing (Henry Hall's famous 'Teddy Bear's Picnic' vocalist) was accompanied by Pierre Fol (violin) and Kantulia (accordeon) in songs from 'Le Million' and 'Sous les toits de Paris', and Campoli played the theme from 'A nous la liberté'. Alfredo Campoli, with his various ensembles, was in those days Decca's answer to the orchestra of the Eastbourne Grand Hotel which, when recording for Parlophone, was led by Leslie Jeffries. Their record of 'The Dance of the Icicles' includes distant sounds of hotel activity, something which did not intrude when Albert Sandler for Columbia led his orchestra in music by Guy d'Hardelot . . . but lo, my trains have returned to base . . .

Yours sincerely, Alan Sheppard  
[redacted] 8th April

## Rally to Our Flag

Dear Ted,

I am hoping some knowledgeable member can help me with a most unusual record in my collection. This is Our Flag B.17, on which the bass Robert Carr sings 'The Ship that will Never Return' and 'Your eyes have Told Me So'. The matrices are E.1207 and E.1208. The year (since the first song obviously refers to 'The Titanic') must be 1912. I should particularly like to know exactly when the sides were recorded or, failing that, when the record was issued; the lyricists and composers (no details are given); and some information about the Kalliope Company, who owned Our Flag. The label is black, gold-lettered, with a small pennant outlined in gold. This is the only example I have encountered and, sadly, it has seen better days.

With kind regards, Peter Cliffe  
[redacted] 17th April



## Research Along the Mohawk

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

Your request for new names to add to your 'Hall of Fame' came at the exact time when, after years of knowing I should 'do it' because I live so close by, I finally decided to get up and 'do it', that is, do a little research on old John Kruesi, who lies patiently awaiting my pen and camera in a cemetery in nearby Schenectady.

I am not a new pen to your pages. Back in the '60s, the days of Ernie Bayly and Gerry Annand, I used to send articles across the water, and made many pen pals in so doing. Time passed and I got into other things, dropping out of phonographia altogether for a few years. Then guilt and loneliness o'ertook me and I rejoined! I must admit I don't know any of the current crop of talented and interesting contributors, save for Mr. Field, who bills me once a year and who, I'd like to think, might be kind enough, as a fellow member, to ship me an occasional odometer cable or windscreen wiper from the Morgan plant in Malvern Link if the need arose, as I would likewise do for him or anyone in need of parts to keep old Edison machines 'to rights'. We must all help each other keep our various types of machines rolling. But, as I began to say, your more recent writers are certainly all very knowledgeable, their articles very authoritatively researched, and the magazine, under your aegis, remains most informative and true to its mission. To wit, I really felt an obligation to research John Kruesi, he having spent the latter part of his life so nearby, and I have most of it ready now. I lack only for finding time to drive the half-hour to Schenectady on a sunny day (we haven't had any!) to photograph his resting place. I will finish the work.

Recordially, Peter C. Betz  
Johnstown, N.Y., 18th April

Peter Betz's article 'How I found my Bettini Cylinders', originally published in "The Hillandale News" in December 1967, was one of three star pieces chosen for reprinting in our celebratory Silver Jubilee issue of October 1985, so this promised contribution on Edison's famous Swiss engineer, John Kruesi, will be eagerly awaited. Thank you, Peter. [Ed.]

## Montréal Meetings, Anybody?

Any Canadian readers who enjoyed Paul Morris's article "A Meeting in Montréal" on page 34 are reminded of Paul's invitation, in our December 1989 issue, to contact him if they share his interests. He would be glad to hear from any Québec talking-machine enthusiasts, who should write to Paul Morris at:

Montréal,  
Québec, Canada.

### The Reverend John A. Petty

Dear Sir,

It is with deep regret that I report the death, in early April, of John Petty, of North Carolina, U.S.A. His tragic death was the result of an accident while working on the underside of one of his old motor vehicles.

John had collected machines and records for many years. He spent much time researching obscure American recording companies and pioneer American recording artists. His speciality was the cylinder and disc records of Cal Stewart (Uncle Josh), and he had some real rarities of this artist, including some non-commercial cylinders.

John devoted much time and labour to the electrical transfer of cylinders and discs to tape. He built up some very sophisticated recording equipment, capable of quite astonishing results. He also built electrical transfer systems for several collectors, including myself. Many collectors throughout the world corresponded with John on a regular basis. He was one of the kindest men I have ever known, never asking anything in return for his favours.

John Petty will be very sadly missed. May I, on behalf of the Society, offer our condolences to his wife Yvonne and family.

John S. Dales  
Rednal, Birmingham, 19th April

# From The Rostrum

Christie's South Kensington,  
5th April 1990

by Christopher Proudfoot

THE GRAMOPHONE SECTION of this sale started off in cracking form with a £1,400 price tag for a Junior Monarch. It was a late example; so late, in fact, that it was really a Model IV, but although dated October 1912 it still had one of the 1911 gold 'Junior Monarch' transfers on the side. To make that price, of course, it had an oak horn. This was one of the early 18" oak horns with gold lines painted on. The machine was in very clean original condition, unrestored but well cared for. By contrast, a Model VII (which was also from 1912, and would a year or so earlier have been called a Senior Monarch) in mahogany with a 21" mahogany horn, made £100 less. It had been thoroughly cleaned; the tone-arm was down to polished brass, and the shiny iron brake was held in place by brand new brass screws: hence the lower price for what should, all things being equal, have been a more expensive machine. It also, incidentally, had a replacement soundbox, but as this was a G&T Exhibition instead of the correct USA-made Gramophone Company version, this is unlikely to have affected the value.

An earlier Junior Monarch, its plated parts brightly re-nickelled and its Morning Glory horn daubed with orange paint, made £450. A redeeming feature was the handsome red and gold 'The Gramophone' banner transfer on its side. This is more often seen on the small 'Victor' and 'New Victor' models. The most interesting 'horner' in the sale was a D.G.A.G. (i.e., the Gramophone Co.'s German subsidiary, as it then was) version of the mahogany Senior Monarch. The English version has Ionic capitals to the pilasters on the corners, but on this the pilasters were unadorned (as on the English Junior Monarch or 'Doric'). Instead, silver-plated embossed copper panels with classical figures were inlaid into the front and sides. The use of metal mounts was common in Germany; these ones were originally 'antique' in

finish (i.e., oxidised), but the oxidising, and much of the silver, had been rubbed off long since. Much loving care and attention was needed on the whole machine, but its unusual case and handsome nickel-plated brass horn pushed the price up to £650. Even the horn was a bit different from what English-speaking collectors would consider normal; although closer to the Morning Glory than some of the locally-made horns used by D.G.A.G., it clearly emanated from a German horn factory rather than the American one supplying Victor and G&T. Finally, on the subject of Monarchs, a 1911 double-spring version with a later soundbox and black (repainted) Morning Glory horn made £55.

Phonographs included a very presentable red Gem at £750 and a Standard with 'C' and 'H' reproducers and black 19" octagonal horn at £500. The same figure was achieved by an Edison Concert - 'Amberolised', and with all but the 'Edison' removed from the banner transfer. The chromium plate on the mandrel didn't help it, either. A comparative rarity was a 'Chalet' Diamond Disc machine - so called, apparently, because it was small enough, being a table grand, to fit in a chalet, not because it looked like one. For this, the hammer came down at £240.

Among gramophones with internal horns, a 1910 HMV Model 8 (the Gramophone Company's first table grand) made £95, but a mahogany Model 8 of 1920 could only muster £40. It had a substitute soundbox and the polish looked like elephant hide. An EMG Mark IV, perhaps the largest of all table grands, made £450, which shows that it is not just those enormous horns that account for current EMG prices. Star of the day, though, was an HMV 203, the biggest of the Re-entrant models. At £5,500 it took the auction record price for a gramophone, a record established nearly ten years ago at £3,200 for a German machine with a mammoth brass horn. In those days there was no Buyers' Premium at South Kensington, but the 203, with premium, cost just over £6,000: ten times the price of a 202 in 1980. What a pity other cabinet gramophones have not gone the same way . . .





# The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society



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# Letter from Finland

by Allan Skogster

**YOU ASKED IT.** You really asked for odd infinitives and that's what you get, dear Ted. (I hope you don't mind me using your first name).

As a collector I have always been more interested in talking machines than in music. My opinion of the "Hillandale News" is that it is a good periodical, but those stories telling about the last London Meeting, opera artists, or English records are not very close to my heart. They are subjects I am not interested in, or not so involved, but I also know that if I want another kind of periodical I should make the whole thing myself.

Let us then go to my photos. The first one is a very good example of what one can find around Europe these days. I found this fancy-looking horn in Brussels a few years ago. Even then I was expert enough to see immediately that it had nothing to do with an original Columbia. Anyway, I was fool enough to pay £100 for it, bring it to Finland, and sell it for £250 to a lady who just wanted something to play her records with in her summer cottage. What puzzles me about this gramophone is, how much money did the man who sold it to me gain? If you look at it you can see that it is built up from a mixture of parts from a portable, a horn gramophone, a 'yesterday-made' horn and a



cabinet from the same era. If one looks at the cabinet alone, and forgets the horn, plus building up the gramophone from a mixture of junk parts, it makes one wonder (at least, if one's hobby is carpentry) who can make a cabinet, looking perfect like this, for less than £70? No carpenter in Finland would do it, these days. What about the horn then? The pure and untouched brass coating makes it look very new and expensive to make. Maybe there is some kind of cabinet and horn industry in Europe, who knows?



In my second photo you can see my 'big horn'. Can my fellow-members help me identify which HMV model this is? I can't find the exactly-matching cabinet from my HMV catalogues. Another thing worrying me about restoring it is this: is it 'Nipper' missing at the front? As you may see, there is only a shadow left at the front of the cabinet. Some years ago the Society sold different kinds of transfers. I don't know whether they included the dog and trumpet or not. Anyway, if somebody knows where I could find a 'dog and trumpet' transfer about 2-3/8" wide from tail to winding handle, please let me know. One more thing about the cabinet: if you examine the photo carefully you can see a black spot on the front right-hand corner of the top cover. 1-3/16" away from that spot is another spot, not visible in the photo. Could it be that the stop lever has been replaced with a new one? Or else what could be the origin of those screw holes?



# London Meeting

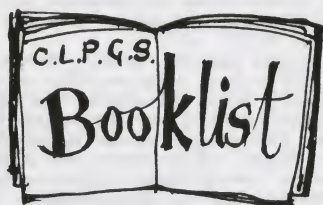
by Len Watts

CHARLES LEVIN presented a well-researched programme (although not exclusively violin-orientated this time) taken from his record collection. The items were interspersed with biographical and recording details of the artists, and with well-informed comments on the merits or otherwise of the performances. There were, as well, a few rare 'label' records and some amusing 'arranged' items. Among interesting records heard were: a Berliner of 1896, George Graham, "The Debating Society"; Eddy Brown, violin, on the rare Royale label; Fritz Kreisler (Liebesfreud, of course); Sergei Rachmaninov in his final recording session aged 69; Fritz Kreisler, again, at the piano accompanying his brother Hugo on the 'cello (a 1921 recording); and Moritz Rosenthal, a pupil of Liszt. Fred Gaisberg pursued Rosenthal all over

Europe, finally securing him for The Gramophone Company after other companies, including Edison, had made recordings of his playing

Helge Roswänge sang 'Der Postillon von Longjumeau' on Odeon, and one Master Shura Cherkassky, at the age of 12, played one of his own compositions on blue-labelled Victors of 1922. He is possibly the only acoustic recording pianist still alive. Others heard were Raoul Kochalsky, piano (another child prodigy), playing the well-known Chopin Nocturne with ornaments said to have been approved by Chopin himself; then Clement Doucet, piano, in some amusing 'arrangements' of Chopin melodies; Artur Rubinstein and Toscanini on V-discs, and Horowitz playing 'The Stars and Stripes Forever'.

A thoroughly entertaining evening enjoyed by a capacity audience which included three visitors from Down Under.

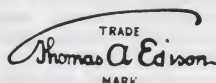


## ALTERATIONS TO THE BOOKLIST CATALOGUE

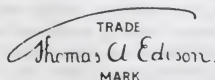
- B. 24 Pathé 1903 Phonograph Catalogue  
Now out of print
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Price increased to £7.50 (UK) £8.25  
(overseas) on all future orders. Price  
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## TRANSFERS FOR EDISON MACHINES

M 21a	Edison trademark for metalwork of machines c.1900 to 1907	£1.00
M 21b	Edison trademark for metalwork of machines c.1907 to 1929	£1.00
M 22	Edison signature for woodwork of most machines after 1902	£1.20
M 23a	G E M for machines from 1900 to 1907	£1.20
M 23b	G E M for machines after 1907	£1.20
M 27	Edison Standard Phonograph Banner, for earlier machines	£2.50



M 21a



M 21b



M 22



M 23a



M 23b

Orders to DAVE ROBERTS,

# Record Reviews

## MORE MOVIE MUSICALS

by Paul Collenette

**T**HIS ALBUM IS AS well-presented as we have come to expect from BBC Enterprises. The liner notes are extensive and informative. There is a razor-sharp photograph of Eleanor Powell in "Broadway Melody of 1937", surrounded by Moss Bros. entire stock plus quiltsful of ostrich feathers. The processing by Robert Parker adds a new and improved texture: the sound becomes crisp rather than chewy.

These soundtracks are from films where any resemblance to reality is purely coincidental. They have a minimum of plot, and a maximum of romance and music. But with wonderful tunes like these who wants story? One of the endearing conventions of these films is the nightclub scene, where the supposedly intimate cabaret-sized stage turns out to be (as the camera sweeps back, revealing armies of chorines, temples of columns and swathes of curtains) about the size of Wiltshire. It is helpful if you have already seen the films, though not essential. It is not hard to imagine you are at the cinema. The newsreel is over; the drink-on-a-stick is -in-your-lap; one more colour change to the curtains, and the Big Picture is about to start.

**Broadway Melody of 1938.** Title Music: no vocal apart from Leo the MGM lion. This rich, lushly-orchestrated introduction well gives the flavour of the album. Other "Broadway Melodies" were made in 1929, 1936, and 1940. **Lullaby of Broadway,** title number. This features Winifred Shaw, who was a great success but retired after only four years of movie-making. The film takes a moment to get up to speed. This is probably the definitive production number from the Warner Brothers-Vitaphone musicals. Busby Berkeley was nominated for an Oscar, but was pipped by Dave Gould at MGM. Rich orchestration with punchy brass section, by Warners' stalwart Ray Heindorf. **Everybody Sing** from "Broadway Melody of 1938". Energetic, cheerful Judy Garland sings an ace Freed-Brown number. (Did they ever write a bad one though?) Lyricist Arthur Freed became a top producer at MGM. Alan Mowbray and Sophie Tucker assist vocally (not much). **Swing me an Old-fashioned Song** from "Little Miss Broadway". Winsome Shirley Temple does her considerable best with this so-so number. Also, Fox's studio orchestra was perhaps not quite up to the high standards of Warners or RKO. **Let's Sing Again:** title number. This is sung by boy soprano Bobby Breen who, at age 8, had already been a radio star with Eddie Cantor. If

you're dying to go out into the foyer for a Gold Flake, now's the time . . .

**Someday my Prince will Come.** Adriana Caselotti's pure (piercing?) voice comes from the soundtrack of "Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs", the first feature-length animated film. There is some surface noise here, but then Walt Disney used the RCA system, not Western Electric. Maybe the family need fetching some Lyons Maid now?

**Song of the Dawn** from "King of Jazz". This is from a 78, not from the soundtrack which, being 1930 and Universal was rather fuzzy. It is sung by John Boles, a matinee idol of a style out of favour today. By the way, it is worth looking out for the Paul Whiteman records from this film (Columbia CB 86, 87, and 88) as similar orchestrations were used to those of the soundtrack. And you get Bing.

**Yours and Mine** from "Broadway Melody of 1938". A short but nice number sung by Hollywood's greatest female dancer, Eleanor Powell.

**Rose Marie;** title number. Courtly (i.e., leaden) tubby Nelson Eddy sings in this definitive 1936 version of the operetta, which was first filmed as a silent! Maybe the scenery could act better, but he had a full, resonant voice, and was highly popular in his partnership with Jeannette Macdonald.

**Indian Love Call** from "Rose Marie". Nelson Eddy is joined by Jeannette Macdonald. Several renderings of the number are assembled here in a continuous version: fortunately there are no key changes!

**You made me love you** from "Broadway Melody of 1938". Judy Garland sings wistfully of her crush on Gable, to his photograph. The novel scene-treatment caused a sensation at the time. **I'm putting all my eggs in one basket** from "Follow the Fleet". Relax, we're now at RKO. This is a fine Irving Berlin song, charmingly sung by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. You can also hear them dance athletically to the varied tempi of the RKO Orchestra.

**Get thee behind me, Satan** from "Follow the Fleet". Harriet Hilliard sings one of the less successful efforts of Mr. Berlin. It had been written for "Top Hat" but mercifully was left out of that matchless film. The sensitive British censor snipped out the word "Satan" from the UK print but here we have it complete.

**Let's face the music and Dance** from "Follow the Fleet". Fred and Ginger again, with moody, dramatic orchestration by Max Steiner, who later joined the likes of Victor Young and the Newmans as one of film music's greats. A small correction to the liner notes: ART direction was by Van Nest (white pianola) Polglase. Hermes Pan was of course DANCE director.

**About a Quarter to Nine** from "Go into your Dance". Al Jolson delivers this catchy Dubin-Warren song in his unique style, with full support of chorus and Vitaphone Orchestra.

**Lullaby of Broadway.** Reprise finale of this film, a tour de force with Winifred Shaw, Vitaphone Orchestra, and the population of a small town in it.



Little Miss Broadway Title Number with George Murphy and chuckling, talented tot, Shirley Temple. George Murphy with his elegant and deceptively casual dancing, good comedy timing and pleasant light voice, deserved better treatment than the studios gave him. Shirley was, of course, given star treatment, especially after 20th-Century took over Fox Films. This is an appealing number, more relaxed than most of the others in this album.

Some of These Days from "Broadway Melody of 1938". Sophie Tucker sings her theme song with plenty of power. The finale is the song "My Broadway and Your Broadway", but there are snatches of most of the other "Broadway"-titled songs.

It is clear that this LP covers plenty of ground, although it is strange that every major film studio has been included except Paramount: they had Maurice Chevalier and Bing Crosby. If you enjoy tuneful songs the Hollywood dream factory product and sheer entertainment professionalism, this record is for you.

MOVIE MUSICALS VOLUME 2, 1930-1938. BBC ENTERPRISES LP REB 767; Cassette ZCF 767; Compact Disc BBC CD 767.

## CLASSIC CROSBY

by Suzanne Lewis

THE TITLES ON THIS ALBUM are fine examples of the early part of Bing Crosby's career, a 'favourable mixture' of standard classics and lesser known tracks. The transfers have been taken from mint copies of the 78s and digitally remastered in stereo. Overall the transfers are very good. Apart from the odd crackle the recordings are crystal clear, but I couldn't help yearning for the old familiar pops and snaps. Crosby's voice is not as polished as it became later in his career, but you can hear the beginnings of his later traits. The presentation of the sleeve and notes is excellent; there is a plain but effective early black-and-white photograph of Bing on the front. The notes are very comprehensive with an excellent description of the early part of Crosby's recording and film career, plus an insert giving dates and recording venues and personnel. Definitely a must for all Bing Crosby collectors and fans!

CLASSIC CROSBY 1931 to 1938.

BBC ENTERPRISES LP REB 766; Cassette ZCF 766; Compact Disc BBC CD 766. Sweet Georgia Brown; How deep is the ocean; Dinah; Love they neighbour; Once in a blue moon; Goodnight, lovely little lady; May I; My Honey's lovin' arms; Home on the range; You've got me crying again; After sundown; Some of these days; Shadows of love; Basin Street Blues; Me and the moon; Sail along, silv'ry moon; Falling in love with someone; A Blues Serenade.

## The BBC Radio Collection 'I.T.M.A.' and 'TAKE IT FROM HERE'

by Ted Cunningham

NOSTALGIA BUFFS WILL WELCOME these radio comedy shows from the 1940s and 1950s. They went out live on air, and these BBC cassettes have been transcribed from the acetates taken at transmission for 'the Sunday repeat'. There are two cassettes in each pack, holding a total of four half-hour programmes; not bad value for (just!) less than £6.00. There is a warning: "The quality of these recordings reflects their age", but they are perfectly acceptable. Typical of BBC acetates of their time, they may not be Hi-Fi, but when we first heard these programmes, on those hot valve radios, through the late-night Medium Wave reception, we had no idea they weren't, and enjoyed them just the same.

All four of the 'ITMA' programmes are special. Three were performances given to the troops during the war; the fourth was a Royal Command Performance given before the King, the Queen, and Princess Margaret as part of the BBC Silver Jubilee celebrations in December 1947. For the occasion it was broadcast, not from the usual Paris Cinema Studio, but from the Concert Hall in Broadcasting House, and, uniquely, it was televised too, the cast having to read from scripts typed on green paper, to avoid reflecting the lights into the cameras. Nonetheless, it went out live just the same, at the usual spot of 8.30 on Thursday night: listeners at home had no forewarning of the special occasion until John Snagge's announcement: "Your Majesties; Your Royal Highness; Ladies and Gentlemen - ITMA!"

The performances to the Fighting Services are the best, being wonderfully evocative of the spirit of those wartime years. The Navy show, from Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, is a classic. The company left London on 7th January 1944 by train, and took 22 hours to reach Thurso at the tip of Scotland. On reaching Scapa Flow they spent several days giving impromptu shows, in the bitter cold, to small groups of servicemen, before making the broadcast on 13th January. All the old favourites are there: Sam Scramm, Poppy Poopah, Signor So-So, and the famous telephone. The pace is terrific, the response from the audience nothing short of emotional, especially when Mrs. Mopp belts out the song "I Never Mention Your Name" to the cheers of the entire Home Fleet. The RAF Show, broadcast on 17th February, was less successful. Scriptwriter Ted Kavanagh thought this due to the service audience having been transported from their home ground to a BBC Studio, so the Army Show, transmitted on 13th April 1944, came from a Garrison Theatre "somewhere in England": actually, from the Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich.

'TAKE IT FROM HERE' began in March 1948, the young scriptwriting team of Frank Muir and

Denis Norden breaking new ground as far as they could, but the ITMA influence was very great: it must have been difficult for any radio show at the time to avoid being a poor imitation, and the very first series was not a great success. I remember they actually had a refugee from 'ITMA' in the cast, Clarence Wright, who discarded his Travelling Salesman's "GOOD Morning, NICE Day!" for the character of a household handyman. He would tap things with a spanner and say "THAT's where your trouble is." The fact that there was ever a second series is a reflection of the great promise shown by the show's team of stars, Dick Bentley, Jimmy Edwards, and Joy Nicholls. The formula was greatly re-thought. Clarence Wright left, to be replaced by Wallace Eaton ("Come back, Jim Edwards; Back to the Buildings!").

I was glad to find that the first of the four programmes in this collection is actually the 10th Anniversary Programme, broadcast on 26th March 1958, in which the team indulged in a little nostalgia of their own, looking back over the ten years run and recalling highlights. They wisely refrained from delving too far back into that first series, but they paid tribute to Joy Nicholls, who had left the show in 1953 and returned to her native Australia. Joy was replaced by two people: Alma Cogan to sing, and the superb June Whitfield to do the comedy character acting. When Alma Cogan died the second musical interlude was dropped. The original three-part format settled down into the pattern that remained for the rest of the show's long successful existence: an opening comic sketch; a song from The Keynotes, and then the latest gruelling instalment from the lives of the Glumm Family; Pa Glumm (Jimmy Edwards), his son Ron (Dick Bentley), and Ron's fiancée, Eth (June Whitfield). The "10th Anniversary" programme departs from that pattern, but the other three contained in these cassettes (all transmitted originally in 1958: 9th April, 7th May, and 21st May) stick to it. Producer Charles Maxwell deserves a mention. He will be remembered, too, for his science-fiction classic "Journey into Space". 'Take it From Here' script conferences used to entail considerable neck-craning, since Muir and Norden are both some 6ft.6in., while Maxwell was only just over 5 feet tall. I must confess to having loved this programme. To hear it again has been wonderful. I had forgotten how good "The Keynotes" were (Pearl Carr, Alan Dean, and the boss, Johnny Johnstone.) To think that these shows, ITMA and Take it From Here, would go out live, with a full orchestra there in the studio, and no chance of a retake; it really does seem remarkable that nothing ever seemed to go wrong. I don't think it could be done today.

For a free catalogue of the complete BBC Radio Collection contact BBC ENTERPRISES, [redacted] London W12 0TT, or telephone 081-576 2062. Overseas order for CDs and cassettes (but not LPs) to BBC World Shop, Bush House, Strand, London, England, C2B 4PH.

## What a give-away!

*The 35th anniversary of an unusual hand-out*

by Peter Adamson

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO I acquired a record which came packed in an ordinary sleeve inside a thick buff paper packet. On this was printed:

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Rather intrigued by this I decided to investigate further, and so I wrote to the IEE to see if they could help. Eventually the Manager of Divisional Services, Mr. Andrew Wilson, kindly came up with a report published in the Journal of the IEE:

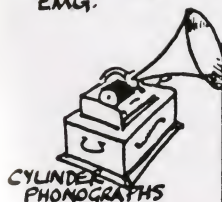
"The Summer Visit of the Section was held . . . in the warm and sunny weather which has become a tradition for this favoured visit. For practical reasons our hosts were forced to limit the party to 100 members and ladies . . . The party was received at the works of Electrical & Musical Industries at Hayes by Mr. B.E.G. Mittell and Mr. H.A.M. Clark and conducted through the works. The party saw, among other activities, the manufacture of cathode-ray tubes and long-playing records, and the assembly of television and radio sets; they also visited the demonstration and music test rooms, where they had the experience of hearing a record of Chinese vocalists. Lunch was served at the Castle Hotel, Windsor, at which Mr. Mittell welcomed the guests and asked each lady to accept a gramophone record as a souvenir of the visit."

A photograph accompanying the report shows 61 of those at lunch, "and ladies" number 23 of these. It is not clear whether the number of members attending was limited 100, or whether the total including ladies was 100, but EMI must have given away at least 35 discs as souvenirs. Most intriguing of all, from my own point of view, was that the record packet was labelled (by hand): DIXIE MEDLEY (OLD RECORD) and contained (you've guessed it) a Berliner.

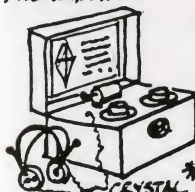




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